

The resemblance of this species to *A. gemmacea* is heightened by the habit of elongating itself in the form of a column, when closed.

It does not throw out filiferous filaments when irritated, but the convoluted bands are protruded from wounds in the base. Examining a small portion of one of these, I found two sorts of capsules; one of a lengthened oval form, $\frac{1}{900}$ th of an inch in length, from which a thread apparently simple, $\frac{1}{24}$ th of an inch long, is evolved; the other and more numerous, excessively linear, $\frac{1}{450}$ th in length. I am not sure, however, whether these latter be capsules, as I did not see one discharge.

In the skin surrounding the margin the capsules are linear-oblong and very minute, $\frac{1}{1750}$ th in length. Those in the walls of the tentacles are similar in form and size.

The name is from *θαλλία*, an olive shoot, in allusion to its elongated form and glaucous colour.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

The Ferns of Great Britain. Illustrated by JOHN E. SOWERBY. The Descriptions, Synonyms, &c. by C. JOHNSON. London: J. E. Sowerby, 3 Mead Place, Lambeth.

WE have received the first two Numbers of this new work upon the British Ferns, and have much pleasure in being able to recommend it to botanists and fern growers. Mr. Johnson has succeeded in making his part of the book readable, without omitting the requisite technical descriptions of the plants. We think that he has acted wisely in retaining the names that are now most in use, for those are also we believe the more correct ones, in nearly if not quite all cases. Much as we are indebted to Mr. Newman for our present knowledge of British Ferns, and greatly as his earlier writings tended to the adoption of a correct nomenclature, we cannot allow the present opportunity to pass without expressing sorrow that he should have made such extensive and, as we think, uncalled-for changes in the names in the lately-issued new edition of his 'History of British Ferns.' It is right however to add, that we have only seen his abridged account of them, published in connection with the 'Phytologist,' as we have not yet had an opportunity of examining his larger work with the requisite care. Having paid no slight attention to the nomenclature of Ferns, we do not expect that our views will be much changed by its perusal.

But to return to the work before us. It may be considered as a proof of how little objection we make to the describer's part of it, when we mention a subject of such slight consequence as the names of the localities. It is nevertheless rather singular that all the Welsh names are spelled wrong; one of them indeed we have not identified, it is *Moel Sichog*; a name that does not occur in Mr. Moore's very

complete list of the localities of our ferns. The latter author has made very similar blunders in printing the singular names of these places, and those who are not intimately acquainted with the Snowdonian mountains may well be excused for transcribing them incorrectly.

No notice is taken of *Polypodium alpestre* and its ally or variety *P. flexile*, in the place which it might have been expected to occupy; but probably Mr. Johnson intends to adopt Mr. Newman's genus *Pseudathyrium*. Neither do we find any remark upon the *Lastrea uliginosa* of Newman, which, if not a variety of *L. cristata*, as some suppose, should find a place between that plant and *L. spinulosa*.

The plates bear out the remark in the Prospectus, that "the figures will be all accurately drawn and engraved from the respective plants, and thus many errors in identity and general detail, which had unavoidably occurred in 'English Botany,' will be rectified." Still, there are manifest traces of the 'Eng. Bot.' plates being before the artist when preparing those now issued.

We look forward with much interest to the publication of the successive parts, and shall probably again notice the work when it is further advanced.

PROCEEDINGS OF LEARNED SOCIETIES.

ROYAL SOCIETY.

June 15, 1854.—The Earl of Rosse, President, in the Chair.

"Contributions to the Anatomy of the Brachiopoda." By Thomas H. Huxley, F.R.S.

In the course of the dissection of certain Brachiopoda with which I have recently been engaged, I have met with so many peculiarities which are unnoticed in the extant and received accounts of their anatomy, that although the pressure of other duties prevents me from attempting to work out the subject with any degree of completeness for the present, I yet gladly avail myself of the opportunity of communicating a few of the more important results at which I have arrived, in the hope that they may find a place in the Proceedings of the Royal Society.

My investigations were principally made upon *Rhynchonella psittacea*, for specimens of which I am indebted to Prof. Edward Forbes, while Dr. Gray obligingly enabled me to compare them with *Waldheimia flavescens* and with *Lingula*.

1. *The Alimentary Canal of Terebratulidæ*.—Professor Owen, in both his earlier and his later memoirs on the anatomy of the Terebratulidæ, describes at length the manner in which the intestine, as he states, terminates on the right side between the lobes of the mantle.

On the other hand, Mr. Hancock has declared himself unable to observe at this point any such anal aperture, and concludes from his own observations that the latter is situated on the ventral surface of the animal in the middle line, just behind the insertion of the great